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'Such a Little Man' WON FORTUNE FOR A LITTLE WAIF

Boys Are Finding Inspiration In the Career of the Wee Fellow Who Was Adopted By Mrs. Shepard, Formerly Helen Miller Gould, and Her Husband--Romance In Real Life Reminds One of Dicken's Story of Oliver Twist



MR. AND MRS. FINLEY SHEPARD

"John Doe, No. 104," a nameless waif, was in one day transferred from a possible life of squalor to the home of the Finley J. Shepards and made heir to millions because, as his new foster-mother expresses it, he "was such a little man."

The blonde hair and blue eyes of this boy of four won Mrs. Shepard's heart from the time she first saw him. She learned he had been found on a church doorstep after having been abandoned. She took him to her home on a visit and he became ill. She nursed him, learned to love him and got her husband's consent to adopt him.

The Shepards, after doctors had pronounced the boy mentally and physically perfect, had detectives search the city for his folks so that they might not bob up at some future date and destroy his life by claiming him and taking him back to squalor.

If children should ever taunt Finley J. Shepard, Jr., on the fact that he is an adopted and not a natural son, he may reply as did another lad in similar circumstances:

"Well, my parents selected me from a number, while your parents had to take you as you came," for he was chosen from hundreds of children met by Mrs. Shepard in her charitable career. The foster mother spent \$50,000 in trying to ascertain his parentage.

When the Shepards decided to adopt the boy they left nothing undone to protect his future and when the matter was made legal by court sanction the new foster father announced that the lad was to be his heir.

"He will be brought up as any other healthy boy. He will not be mollycoddled. He will be allowed to select his own career," said his foster father.

Finley J. Shepard, Sr., prefers that he take up a railroad career so that he may succeed him as head of the Gould possessions.

"He is such a little man," said Mrs. Helen Gould Shepard in explaining her love and that of her husband for the nameless youth they have made their own.

Because "John Doe, No. 104" was such a "little man" he has won a

place in the world that thousands might envy. No more poverty, no more friendless existence in an orphan's home, but a great financial future, with everything he might desire, opportunity to study and travel, are before him.

Physicians, scientists and social workers always have maintained that a child left to its own resorts makes the best man in the long run. If that be the case then this child by his own efforts won the love of Mr. and Mrs. Finley J. Shepard that means his future fortune.

On the night of September 17, 1914, a policeman walking his beat found a boy shivering on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. The youth, then four years old, was taken to the precinct station, where at first he said his father left him and later referred to the one who had abandoned him as "that man."

He did not know where his home was and his name, as nearly as his accent could be distinguished, was Austin McCleary. At any rate by this name, alias John Doe No. 104, he went on the official record.

He was kept at the Children's Society until October 9, 1914, when he appeared before Justice Hoyt in Children's Court and was sent to St. Christopher's Home.

LIKE A DICKENS CHARACTER.

In all this time he might well have been compared with the homeless orphan, Oliver Twist, of Dickens' famous novel.

Had it not been for the kindly intervention of the Shepards the fate of "No. 104" might have been similar to that of Oliver Twist's when the parish beadle came to take him from Mrs. Mann's where he had been farmed out at the village expense.

"Make a bow to the gentleman, Oliver," said Mrs. Mann, (Dickens' tale).

Poor Oliver made a bow that was divided between the beadle on the chair and his cocked-hat on the table.

"Will you go along with me, Oliver?" asked Mr. Bumble, the beadle, in a majestic voice. Oliver was about to say that he would go along with anybody with great readiness

when, glancing upwards he caught sight of Mrs. Mann, who had got behind the beadle's chair and was shaking her fist at him with a furious countenance.

He took the hint at once for the fist had been too often impressed upon his body not to be deeply impressed upon his recollection.

"Will she go with me?" inquired poor Oliver.

"No, she can't," replied Mr. Bumble, "but she'll come and see you sometimes." This was no very great consolation to the child. Young as he was, however, he had sense enough to make a feint of feeling great regret at going away. It was no very difficult matter for the boy to call the tears into his eyes. Hunger and recent ill-usage, (Oliver had been locked in a coal cellar without food), are great assistants.

If you want to cry, and Oliver cried very naturally indeed. Mrs. Mann gave him a thousand embraces and what Oliver wanted a great deal more, a piece of bread and butter, lest he should seem too hungry when he got to the workhouse where he was to be taken by Mr. Bumble, the beadle.

GRIEF OF OLIVER.

"With the slice of bread in his hand and the little brown cloth parish cap on his head, Oliver then was led away by Mr. Bumble from the wretched home where one kind word had never lighted the gloom of his infant years. And yet he burst into an agony of childish grief as the cottage gate closed after him. Wretched as were the little companions of misery he was leaving behind him, they were the only friends he had ever known; and a sense of his loneliness in the great wide world, sank into the child's heart for the first time."

This might have been the fate of "John Doe, No. 104," he might have like Oliver Twist fallen into the hands of a Bill Sykes and a Fagin had not the horoscope of his early days turned toward the good fortune that now is his.

When Mrs. Helen Gould Shepard cast eyes on this pretty infant, the many boys whose early grief and abandonment had left him with

those qualities of self-preservation and independence that made Mrs. Shepard decide he was "such a little man."

Mrs. Shepard found him in the course of one of her charitable visits and was attracted by his light hair, blue eyes and bright manner. It seemed that every time she came there the waif stretched out his arms to her and that poor little soul that had known no love and happiness in life was calling out to her for a share of the generous love that filled her heart to overflowing and left enough there to distribute as beams of sunshine among the poor and neglected.

Last February Mrs. Shepard took him to her home, 579 Fifth avenue, New York. For the first time in his life, "John Doe, No. 104" knew what the outside world was like. For the first time this nameless orphan knew what real toys are like. He obtained his first glimpse of riches. The light of wealth and happiness flashed into his childish mind and blinded him as a man who has been blind from childhood is overwhelmed by the sight of the sun when his gaze is suddenly restored.

CASE OF CHICKEN POX.

"John Doe, No. 104," played with the two children of Frank J. Gould and the three became afflicted with the chicken pox and it meant the enforced stay of the waif in the Shepard home. Those were happy days for the little waif. Never before had he known such loving care as was given him by the kind Helen Gould Shepard. It was like being in heaven for this lad to feel her tender touch or her lips sweeping his feverish brow.

It was then that Mrs. Shepard's heart went out to the boy. She timidly broached the subject to her husband and was overjoyed when he gave his consent.

The matter of adopting an heir to the Gould millions is no simple matter. Physicians were called and made very known test to determine if the adopted son, at some future date, might develop physical or mental peculiarity that would disgrace his foster parents.

Such were the possibilities of the



FINLEY SHEPARD, JR.



future. If the child's father had been a drunkard it were a possibility, considering the uncertain laws of heredity, that the child might become one at some future date in the midst of the prosperity that surrounded him. If the mother and father both were mentally deficient it were possible that at some future date the adopted Shepard might not develop an inability to carefully manage the great financial duties to which he would be intrusted.

If there were any criminal tendency in the family it might be developed in the heir of the Gould millions. So the doctors employed all known tests and finally pronounced the boy mentally and physically perfect, well able to bear the duties that would be his in the future when he shall inherit the wealth of his adopted parents.

But this was not sufficient. The Shepards were determined that nothing should mar the future of their heir.

They employed private detectives to make every effort to trace the boy's parents. If the parents existed there was the possibility that at some future time when the boy became wealthy and won his place in the business world that these same parents might claim him and drag him from the pedestal of wealth back into poverty and mystery.

After a search of several months the detectives reported that they could find no trace of the people who had abandoned the child in the church. Thereupon the Shepards announced they had adopted the lad and took the legal steps necessary to make him the heir to their millions.

The boy as said before has blue eyes and fair hair. He is very intelligent and well-mannered and was a favorite in the orphan home

whence he came.

When he was taken to the Shepards country home, Lyndhurst, he made himself right at home and has been romping there since in the ecstasy of his new found joy. He is very fond of Mrs. Shepard and from the first called her mother and Mr. Shepard father.

That the two are absolutely enamored of their adopted son goes without saying. Otherwise they would not have undergone the publicity of having adopted him and made a former nameless waif heir to millions and to have provided for him the place in the social and financial world that will be accorded him when he becomes of age.

"The lad is our son in every sense of the word," says Finley J. Shepard, Sr. "Our adopting him is in no sense an experiment. We adopted him because we love him and because we wanted a boy. He shall be our heir."

"My son will have every advantage we can give him, but there will be no mollycoddling. He is, I believe, the most remarkable 5-year-old boy I ever have seen--full of life and very intelligent. He gives every evidence of having come from a good family."

A RAILROAD CAREER.

Shepard, when asked if he planned a railroad career for his adopted son said: "No, not especially. Both Mrs. Shepard and I believe a youth should follow his natural bent. Of course, I would be glad to have him select a railroad career, but that will be up to him."

So the young Shepard heir is to be allowed to follow his own whims to a certain extent. Already he has his own governess who has been charged with the particular duty of seeing that he imbibes from his surroundings and from the presence of

his foster parents the necessary seeds of culture that will sprout and grow when he enters manhood and will make him fit to take his place in the world and will bear the name that has been given to him as sort of a gift from Providence and at the same time is the greatest gift two loving souls could bestow.

The bestowal of her name and wealth on this otherwise nameless lad is in line with Helen Gould Shepard's sincere kindnesses of the past. There is not a railroad man from New York to San Francisco who does not know her and in knowing her loves her. From her father she inherited a sort of a love and tender feeling for the men on the Gould lines. She mingled among the men, doing charitable works for them and it was she who established the various railroad Y. M. C. A.'s and from her own wealth gave the funds necessary for their buildings.

So when that far-reaching love for mankind was still overshadowing and sought to embrace more territory her eye was cast on children. She might have selected any of a hundred or even a thousand waifs yet her pity went out to the most unfortunate of all--a child who had no family or even friends or relatives, whose future life could be nothing but a vast waste with its entire history based on the time it had spent in orphan homes.

"No. 104" was on the road of hundreds of other children when he was grasped from the cruel hands of the fate that swallows up children and makes them slaves, and transferred into the lap of wealth as suddenly as if his childish hands had rubbed Aladdin's lamp.

Certainly the Shepards have done more than adopt a mere waif. They have given their hearts and their riches to making a man and a worthy man out of one whose natural bent might have been in some other and less worthy direction had they not wrested the brand from the fire --"BECAUSE HE WAS SUCH A LITTLE MAN."